2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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the city walls was formerly covered with monasteries, each of them standing separate and enclosed within its own parawun, and almost all presided over by a sadaw, a monk of the highest rank. They were thus entirely independent of each other. One of the most interesting for Englishmen is the Thiho Taik, the "Ceylon Monastery," presided over by Lingayāmā, a sadaw who was in great favour with Mindôn Min, the last king but one. The term taik is always applied to a "bishop's monastery," as implying that his is the chief of a number of kyaungs, all under his care, and in which he makes occasional sojourns. The Thiho Taik is peculiar for its trim appearance. It is very new; the under part of all the buildings is of brick; the compound is kept scrupulously clean; there is not a single large tree in it, and the parawun is a neat sawn-wood fence, instead of being, as is the case almost everywhere else, composed simply of huge stems of trees placed side by side in the ground. The sadaw himself is a very [illegible]d man. He has been several times to Rangoon to worship at the Great Pagoda, and to decide on questions in dispute. He has, in his library, copies of the English Scriptures in the Burmese version of Judson, and has read them through. Numbers of American Baptists' tracts, and the sacred books of other religions, have also a place in his manuscript chests. These are all deposited in a separate building standing in the middle of the enclosure, and used for no other purpose, except that the scribes sit here making copies of borrowed MSS., or setting down notes of the learned bishop himself. The palm-leaf book is still universal, and the work of making up a volume is therefore very laborious; for the most practised manipulator cannot, with his agate style and light strip of palmyra-leaf, exceed the speed of an English boy who has just got over the preliminary difficulties of pot-hooks and hangers. The letters scratched on the leaf are made more distinct by the application of crude earth-oil. This serves to darken the writing, as well as to preserve the book. The regular scribes are always laymen, and it is a matter of very considerable unpleasantness to the cenobites, that the cleverest of them are very often uncommonly bad livers, spending all their gains in libations of "Old Tom," or little

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balls of opium. These vagaries are, however, frequently winked at, for a copyist who can write neatly and with accuracy is far from being common.

The Thiho Taik library is a model in its way. It is nearly the best monastic collection in Mandalay, and is certainly far better arranged than any other. The sadaiks, or manuscript boxes, are arranged in three rows, one over the other; the thôts and zāts—the sermons and birth-stories—of the Lord Buddha below; above them the Cinghalese commentaries and exegeses; and on the top shelf Burmese translations and the explanations of various learned sadaws. Each chest contains a large number of different books, every separate collection of leaves being enclosed between wooden boards, some plain, some carved in high relief, with figures of dêwas and demons. Round this is wrapped a kabalwè, a square piece of cloth with inwoven scenes from the sacred books, or portions of the Law, and the formulæ used at the pagoda. Most of these are of silk, very often with narrow slips of bamboo worked in so as to give stiffness to the whole. Instead of this, or sometimes in addition, is used the sā-si-gyo, a riband, about two fingers' breadth, and upwards of a yard in length. This is knitted or crocheted in a peculiarly close fashion, which puzzles English ladies. On it is worked the name of the owner, his titles and distinctions, and whatever other aspirations he chooses to add. They are very neat, and quite easy to read, an advantage which does not always characterise Berlin wool work. The king's grants of forest land, monopolies, and the like, were usually executed in this way.

All the boxes are kept carefully locked, and the door is barred at night, for such a library represents years of labour, and could only with the greatest difficulty be replaced. It is only in Mandalay that libraries of any value are to be found. In Lower Burma the majority of the kyaungs do not even possess a complete copy of the three parts of the Bitaghat, the Buddhist Bible, and some few have nothing beyond a copy of the Kammawāsā, and perhaps a Malla Lingaya Wuttu, a life of the Lord Buddha, or something of the kind. Many others have, no doubt, valuable collections, but the monks are ignorant, they cannot read the books

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792 217 themselves, and they do not care to exhibit them to those who can. Consequently, they moulder away in the bottom of the sadaik, crushed away into the darkest corner of the main room of the monastery. It is, perhaps, not surprising that the most learned monks do not belong to the large towns, but come from remote kyaungs in the depths of the jungle. This is true also of Upper Burma, for though the sadaws in Mandalay are the most learned in the country, they have acquired their reputation in jungle monasteries, and have only been summoned to the royal city when their fame has spread over the land, and the title of royal teacher has been conferred on them.

000 The main room of Lingayāmā's Monastery contains a great number of curiosities collected by the Burmese Embassies on their travels through Europe. Most of these were presented by the Kin Wun-gyi, the head of the mission, and are in many ways most interesting. Prominent is a large photograph album, emblazoned with the Italian royal arms and containing a fine collection of views. Another album is filled with cartes of members of the Embassy, notably of the lamented Naingan-gyaw Wun-dauk, the portly and good-natured "Pio Nono" of the *Daily News*, who seems never to have missed being photographed wherever he went, and figured in every style, from the penny smudge, apparently taken on a country race-course or outside Battersea Park, to the coloured and gilt grandeur of a Neapolitan cabinet. The author of the *Encyclopædia of Burmese Literature* had no notion of changing the expression of his face, however. He looks stolidly like just having had his dinner in every impression, and the multiplication of photographs serves principally as a means of comparing different styles of art, and exhibiting the great stock of clothing which the worthy Wun-dauk carried about with him.

In addition to the photographs, there is a great collection of engravings, some of them very valuable; and mixed up with these are to be found some very queer items—old hotel bills, advertisements of gigantic hosiery establishments, with pictures of the same at the top, circus play-bills, shilling view guides, some sheets of the *Graphic*, the front page of the wrapper of *Punch*, and a few railway tickets. These are

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in itself, but serves as a most satisfactory corroboration of the truth of the events prognosticated by the movements and surroundings of the tha-gyā king. The conclusions are all carefully noted down in the thi'gyan sa, and great piles of these are carefully preserved in the archives of the monkish library, seldom to be looked at again.

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Besides the events which are to happen in the coming year the astrologers are also able to determine whether the tha-gyā min will remain three days or four days upon earth. If he stays three days it is called a matulè year, if four, tawtulè, and the water-throwing is carried on a corresponding time.

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All these points are settled some time beforehand, so that every one in the remotest part of the country may have due notice, and then information is sent to the heads of monasteries, and the chief districts, and all is made ready to receive his nat-majesty with proper hŏnours. When at last the day comes round, all are on the watch, and when the wise men give the signal, tha-gyā min kyabyi, the king has come down, a cannon is fired off, and forthwith all the people come out of doors with pots full of water, the mouths of the jars filled up with fresh green leaves and twigs of the sacred tha-bye tree. A formal prayer is said, and the water is poured out on the ground, and all are happy. Many years ago an event happened which singularly impressed true believers in the royal city. Just when expectation was at its highest and all ears were strained in expectation of the roar of the cannon, there was a terrific thunderclap, which made all the town quiver, and demonstrated the accuracy of the pŏnnas' calculations. There was no more thunder that night, and the ranks of the pious received great increase during the ensuing week. In country towns and villages every one who has a gun rushes out into the street at the appointed hour and fires it off. Most wonderful blunderbusses and old flintlocks and ancient rusty horse-pistols make their appearance, warranted to make a noise, but capable of little more. After this ceremony is over a few go to bed,—for the descent is usually made at midnight,—but the majority sit up and talk.

With the earliest glimmer of light all rise, and taking

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
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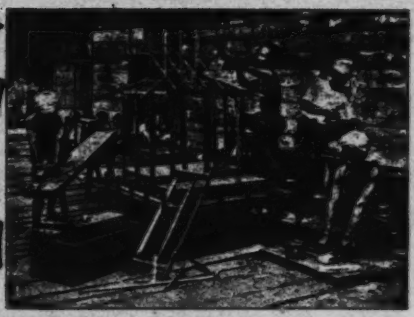

267. BURMAN CARPENTERS.

arbour of tracery, which entirely encloses them. Ivory hafts and scabbards of daggers and sabres are ornamented in the same way. The ivory carving is not polished.

The conventional flat design, painting and embroidery exhibit affinities to the Indian decoration of the ancient temples (Nos. 94, 272). The anachronisms and other naiveties of our mediæval designers are paralleled in modern Burma; witness the introduction of British officers with their field-glasses in the design of the Prince of Pagán destroying the monster at Hngeppyittaung (No. 224). The medium used for painting is a coarse tempera. From the labels attached to European goods, many of which are excellent in design and colour, lessons in colouring and perspective have been learned. From photographs, ideas of accuracy have been gathered, and from illustrated newspapers, ideas of composition. Neither carver nor designer ever uses a model. The painter of No. 433 confessed that he had not seen the place himself; he had it described to him. In pure design without colour, the *shwezawd* work is the best. It is a kind of drawing in lacquer, which appears black on a gold ground (No. 96). Of late the Burmans have attempted cuts on type-metal for illustrations of books (No. 276). They are executed with chisel and punch; the graver is unknown.

269. BURMAN TURNER.

Ancient inscriptions are rare in Burma, although the *thamding*, or depository for slabs recording the circumstances of religious foundations, is a recognised institution. In many of the *thamding* at Pagán may be seen the ancient *Pâli* square character, of which the Burmese round character is a development. The square character is preserved in the *kambawd* (No. 46). The late King Mindôn Min caused the whole of the Pâli text of the Tripitaka to be